

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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AMEMBASSY LAGOS
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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 1070

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UNHRC
SUBJECT: 34TH SESSION OF UNHRC, GENEVA, FEB 6 - MAR 10

REF: (A) STATE 22442, (B) STATE 24837, (C) STATE 16347,
(D) ABIDJAN 846, (E) STATE 15786

1. EMBASSY OFFICER MET WITH THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF
POLITICAL AFFAIRS MFA FOR EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION ON
UNHRC MEETING IN GENEVA. DRAWING FROM REFTELS, EMBASSY
OFFICER STATED THAT THE USG IS INTERESTED IN
A COOPERATIVE AND PRODUCTIVE MEETING AND IN WORKING OUT
DIFFICULT ISSUES ON HUMAN RIGHTS. IN A SPIRIT OF CANDOR
AND MUTUAL RESPECT; THAT WE REGARD THE HRC AS THE
PRINCIPLE ORGAN IN THE UN FOR PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS;
AND THAT WE PLACE GREAT IMPORTANCE IN CONSULTING AND
CONCERTING WITH IVORY COAST DELEGATION. PER PARA 3
REFTEL A, EMBASSY OFFICER THEN MADE FUHCRED PRESEN-
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TATION ON: 1503 PROCEDURES; VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
IN UGANDA; HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (HCHR);
DETAINEES IN SOUTH AFRICA; ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUES; AND
ON THE RE-ELECTION OF AMBASSADOR CARTER TO THE HRC
SUBCOMMISSION ON THE PROTECTION OF MINORITIES.

2. IN RESPONSE, MFA OFFICIAL STATED GOIC ATTACHED

GREAT IMPORTANCE TO WORKING CLOSELY WITH USDEL. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT "LIKE-MINDED COUNTRIES CONCERT TO ASSURE A CONSTRUCTIVE MEETING." HE ADDED THAT IVORIAN AMBASSADOR IN NEW YORK WOULD VERY LIKELY LEAD THE IVORIAN DELEGATION, WHICH WILL INCLUDE OFFICIALS FROM THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, THE SUPREME COURT AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE. UNFORTUNATELY, HE DID NOT HAVE ANY NAMES, BUT HE THOUGHT THE PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COURT, ALPHONSE BONI, WOULD ATTEND.

3. ON THE SPECIFIC ISSUES RAISED BY EMBASSY OFFICER, MFA OFFICIAL RESPONDED AS FOLLOWS:

A. ON 1503 PROCEDURES: GOIC AGREES THAT ALL GOVERNMENTS SHOULD SUPPORT THE FUNCTIONING OF 1503 PROCEDURES AND THAT IT COULD BE AN EFFECTIVE MEANS FOR IMPROVING THE IMAGE OF THE UNHRC. HE AGREED THE LATTER HAD SOMETIMES USED A DOUBLE STANDARD. INDEED, IF THE UNHRC WILL DISCUSS UGANDA, WHY NOT CAMBODIA, CHINA, CHILE AND OTHERS?

B. ON VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN UGANDA: GOIC OPPOSES VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS EVERYWHERE. INDEED, IVORY COAST HAS SOMETIMES BEEN PRACTICALLY ALONE IN SPEAKING OUT AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN AFRICA, FOR EXAMPLE IN BIAFRA. THE GOIC APPRECIATES

OUR AWARENESS OF THE DELICACY OF THE UGANDA PROBLEM.
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LIKE IVORY COAST, UGANDA IS A MEMBER OF THE OAU. THE CHARTER OF THE OAU FORBIDS MEMBER STATES TO INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF EACH OTHER. THIS DOES NOT MEAN IVORY COAST IS OPPOSED TO FAIR AND CONSTRUCTIVE DISCUSSION ON UGANDA, "IF UGANDA IS NOT SINGLED OUT FOR CONDEMNATION." PERHAPS, THE MFA OFFICIAL CONTINUED, "THE BEST WAY TO HANDLE THE ISSUE IS BY "DISCUSSING UGANDA TOGETHER WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. WHY NOT CAMBODIA? CHINA? CHILE?"

C. ON A HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS: GOIC WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT US. IVORY COAST WILL BE VERY INTERESTED IN WHAT THE SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HCHR WOULD BE. HIS RESPONSIBILITIES SHOULD BE "REALISTIC AND WORTHWHILE." MFA OFFICIAL ADDED THAT MANY AFRICAN COUNTRIES FEAR THAT HCHR WOULD BECOME "AN INSTRUMENT FOR NEO-COLONIALISM OR FOR IMPERIALISM."

D. ON DETAINEES IN SOUTH AFRICA: GOIC AGREES THAT MEMBERS OF UNHRC SHOULD NOT DWELL ON DIVISIVE ISSUES, "EVEN AS THEY CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON THE CONTINUING VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE PROBLEM WILL NOT GO AWAY."

E. ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUES: WHILE THE RIGHTS OF
THE PALESTINIANS MUST NOT BE IGNORED, GOIC READILY

AGREES THAT PROLONGED, FUTILE DEBATES SHOULD BE AVOIDED,
PARTICULARLY AT THIS POINT IN THE ON-GOING EGYPTIAN-
ISRAELI NEGOTIATION TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLE-

MENT.
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